



ARTIST'S SKETCH . . . Pictured here is the artist's conception of the new Scott Robinson Pontiac agency, now under construction on Hawthorne Boulevard. The agency

will include new and used car display areas and a complete service department. The new car dealership is located at 20340 Hawthorne Blvd.

## Jet Age Makes Import Of Smallpox Possible

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County Health Officer

Small pox is an intensely contagious disease which is endemic in certain parts of the world, particularly in some countries of Asia, Africa, and South America. In this era of international jet travel the import of smallpox into the United States is not an impossibility, and unless a high level of immunity is maintained in the population an epidemic of the disease could occur.

The World Health Organization has reported that smallpox was imported into no less than 18 countries in 1956 and into 11 in the year ending June 30, 1959. More recently (February 1961), Madrid was declared a smallpox infected area when 15 known cases of the disease were reported — the source of the infection being a small child who had recently arrived from Bombay.

ANYONE unprotected by smallpox vaccination or by a previous attack of the disease is susceptible to infection by the smallpox virus. The organisms pass from person to person through contact with the nose and throat secretions or the lesions of infected individuals. The infective agents may also be air-borne within a limited and closed area.

Illness generally appears in about 12 days after infection, although the period may vary from seven to 14 days. Fever, chills, headache, backache, and even vomiting may be among the first signs of illness. After three or four days an eruption appears on the skin, predominantly on the face and extremities, and the patient then feels more comfortable. In the classical or severe case of smallpox, the lesions pass through several stages and the individual may again be prostrated, especially in the last or pustular stage.

THERE IS NO effective treatment for the disease once it develops, but some antibiotics are extremely valuable in controlling secondary infections, such as abscesses and pneumonia, that may arise. Mortality in severe cases of the disease is reported to be as high as 30 per cent.

An attack of smallpox usually confers long-lasting immunity and second attacks, although they do occur, are rare.

In this country, vaccination against smallpox is recommended at about three months of age and again before the child starts to school. Since the disease is practically nonexistent in the United States, Canada, and Mexico, revaccination every three years is considered sufficient to maintain mass immunity at a high enough level to preclude the possibility of a smallpox epidemic. Smallpox vaccination, it is pointed out, may be obtained from any private physician or at any health center.

DURATION of individual immunity following vaccination is variable, ranging from several months to many years. Smallpox may even occur in vaccinated individuals, but its occurrence is very unusual within a year following successful vaccination. In such instances, the attack is generally mild.

Vaccination against smallpox is inadvisable when a person has eczema or any severe skin rash or is in close contact with

someone who does. In these cases, there is a danger that such exposure will result in generalized vaccinia — a condition in which the vaccination pustules break out over the body in about 6 to 14 days after inoculation instead of being localized to the vaccination site. While the pustules usually heal without significant scarring, the patient may nevertheless

be quite uncomfortable. In small children, the illness that accompanies this condition may be quite serious.

THE LAST case of smallpox reported in the United States was in 1953. None have occurred in Los Angeles County since 1940, and none have been recorded in California since 1947. Moreover, from 1958 to

1959, the number of smallpox cases reported to the World Health Organization decreased by 70 per cent — from 242,000 to 72,000.

There is no doubt that smallpox is a vanishing disease. Until the time it is stamped out on a global scale, however, its possible importation remains a serious threat to unprotected individuals.



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